

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125
ORIGIN SSO-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CCO-00 ONY-00 /001 R

DRAFTED BY S/S-O: DGREENLEE INR/CIS:PETERSON/SHOEMAKE
APPROVED BY S/S-O: RPERITO
DESIRED DISTRIBUTION
S/S-O ONLY

-----182359 103257 /75

O 182312Z FEB 77 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PFOR (VANCE, CYRUS)

SUBJECT: SPECIAL SUMMARY NUMBER FIVE: TELEGRAPHIC AND
INTELLIGENCE

A. TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY

1. ARBATOV ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND US-SOVIET RELATIONS
2. SOARES LOBBIES LONDON
3. FRG REPORTS SEE UGANDAN REPRESSION WIDENING
4. SAUDI AID MAY HELP CONSOLE JILTED SOMALIS
5. ECUADOR: ANOTHER TRY ON ARMS AID
6. THE NEXT FOREIGN SECRETARY

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

B. INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

B. INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

1. SOVIET COMMENT ON SECRETARY'S ME TRIP

2. CUBAN INTENTIONS IN ANGOLA

3. USSR: MOSCOW'S DILEMMA ON DISSIDENCE AND DETENTE

4. SYRIA/USSR: BILATERAL RELATIONS

1. ARBATOV ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND US-SOVIET RELATIONS

OUR EMBASSY IN MOSCOW HAS BEEN BRIEFED IN CONFIDENCE BY A CANADIAN EMBASSY OFFICER ON CANADIAN AMBASSADOR FORD'S FEBRUARY 11 DISCUSSION WITH GEORGIY ARBATOV, DIRECTOR OF THE SOVIET UNION'S PRESTIGIOUS USA INSTITUTE. DURING THEIR CONVERSATION, WHICH WAS CONCERNED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY WITH US-SOVIET RELATIONS, ARBATOV VOICED HIS OPINIONS ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, PRESIDENT CARTER, AND LINKAGE. ON HUMAN RIGHTS, ARBATOV:

--EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT RECENT DEVELOPMENTS;

--SUGGESTED THAT THERE IS A PLOT TO SUBVERT THE USSR BY CONSTANT OVERT SUPPORT OF DISSIDENTS;

--SAID US SUPPORT FOR ALEKSANDR GINZBURG AND OTHER DISSIDENTS WOULD BE COMPARABLE TO SOVIET SUPPORT FOR THE WEATHERMEN; AND

--WARNED THAT THE US SHOULD NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE EMOTIONAL REACTION IN THE USSR WHICH AMERICAN CONCERNATION ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE MIGHT PROVOKE.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

ARBATOV SAID THAT PRESIDENT CARTER WAS A "NEW PHENOMENON" WHICH NEEDED CAREFUL STUDY. HE NOTED THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD COME ON THE SCENE AT A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT MOMENT FOR THE US AND THAT HE HAD SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH SOME VERY ABLE, EXPERIENCED AND FLEXIBLE ADVISORS, ALTHOUGH THE SOVIETS REMAIN SUSPICIOUS OF "HARDLINERS" LIKE PROFESSOR BRZEZINSKI:

ARBATOV WELCOMED THE DEMISE OF LINKAGE, WHICH HE SAID WOULD MAKE NEGOTIATIONS EASIER. HE SAID THAT ON THE WHOLE SALT AND DISSENT COULD BE SEPARATED, BUT HE WARNED THAT AGGRAVATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE WOULD NOT CREATE THE RIGHT ATMOSPHERE FOR SERIOUS NEGOTIATIONS. HE WAS VERY CAUTIOUS ABOUT THE PRESIDENT'S SUGGESTION TO LEAVE THE CRUISE MISSILE AND THE BACKFIRE BOMBER OUT OF SALT II, EXPRESSING CONCERN THAT THE MOMENTUM IN CRUISE MISSILE DEVELOPMENT MIGHT NOT PERMIT THIS.

EMBASSY COMMENT: THOUGH ARBATOV MUST HAVE CALCULATED THAT HIS REMARKS WOULD REACH THE USG, WE DOUBT THAT HE WAS EXAGGERATING SOVIET CONCERN OVER THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE. OUR EXPERIENCE IS THAT HIS REMARKS ON SUCH OCCASIONS GENERALLY REFLECT THE VIEWS WHICH ARBATOV TRANSMITS TO THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP.

2. SOARES LOBBIES LONDON

DURING HIS VISIT TO LONDON IN SEARCH OF SUPPORT FOR PORTUGAL'S EC MEMBERSHIP BID, PRIME MINISTER SOARES TOLD PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN THAT:

--MEMBERSHIP WOULD NOT ONLY PREVENT PORTUGAL FROM BECOMING A "EUROPEAN CUBA," BUT WOULD SAVE IT FROM TURNING INTO A "EUROPEAN COLONY OF THE US."

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

--PORTUGAL SHOULD BE ABLE TO PAY ITS DEBTS BY 1981-82, AND ITS ECONOMIC SITUATION IS NOT AT DESPERATE AS THAT OF GREECE AND TURKEY.

--PORTUGAL WILL PRESENT ITS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION NEXT MONTH, AND HOPES THE COMMISSION WILL RESPOND TO IT "IMMEDIATELY."

EMBASSY COMMENT: CALLAGHAN RECEIVED SOARES WARMLY, AND THE FCO BELIEVES BRITAIN WILL TRY TO CONVINCE THE EC TO MOVE LISBON'S APPLICATION ALONG. DESPITE ACUTE AWARENESS OF THE POTENTIAL ECONOMIC COST OF PORTUGAL'S MEMBERSHIP, HMG CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THE COMMUNITY SHOULD GIVE FIRST PRIORITY TO THE POLITICAL AIM OF STRENGTHENING DEMOCRACY THERE.

3. FRG REPORTS SEE UGANDAN REPRESSION WIDENING

EMBASSY BONN HAS OBTAINED A REPORT FROM THE FRG EMBASSY IN KAMPALA CONCERNING THE DEATHS OF ANGLICAN ARCHBISHOP LUWUM AND TWO CABINET-LEVEL UGANDAN OFFICIALS FEBRUARY 16. ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, THERE ARE STRONG INDICATIONS THAT THEY DID NOT DIE IN A CAR ACCIDENT AS CLAIMED, BUT WERE MURDERED ON AMIN'S EXPRESS ORDERS.

THE FRG EMBASSY EXPECTS THE AMIN REGIME TO TAKE FURTHER REPRESSIVE MEASURES AGAINST MEMBERS OF THE LANGI AND ACHOLI TRIBES AND PROTESTANT CHURCH DIGNITARIES. IT DESCRIBES THE UGANDAN POPULATION AS COMPLETELY INTIMIDATED.

4. SAUDI AID MAY HELP CONSOLE JILTED SOMALIS

DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER AL MANSOURI TOLD AMBASSADOR PORTER
FEBRUARY 16 THAT SAUDI ARABIA MAY SOON RESUME FINANCIAL
AID TO SOMALIA IN AN EFFORT TO BLOCK GROWING SOVIET IN-
FLUENCE IN THE HORN OF AFRICA. HE SAID THE SAG INTENDS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

TO MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE RUSSIANS TO ACHIEVE
THEIR GOAL OF IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH BOTH SOMALIA AND
ETHIOPIA. THE SAUDIS BELIEVE THE NEW ETHIOPIAN REGIME
HAS TILTED SHARPLY TOWARD THE SOVIETS, AND PLAN TO EXPLOIT
THE OPPORTUNITY THIS PRESENTS TO WOO ITS SOMALI RIVAL.

MEANWHILE, THE EMBASSY HAS LEARNED FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT
SOMALI PRESIDENT SIAD BARRE'S SON-IN-LAW VISITED SAUDI
ARABIA TWO WEEKS AGO IN SEARCH OF AID, PARTIALLY ON THE
GROUNDS THAT THE SOVIETS WERE NOW MORE INTERESTED IN
ETHIOPIA THAN SOMALIA.

5. ECUADOR: ANOTHER TRY ON ARMS AID

EMBASSY QUITO REPORTS THAT THE GOE IS PLANNING TO SEND A
HIGH-LEVEL MISSION INCLUDING FOREIGN MINISTER SALVADOR
LARA AND DEFENSE MINISTER ARRATA TO WASHINGTON NEXT MONTH
TO DISCUSS DEFENSE PROBLEMS AND BILATERAL RELATIONS.
ADMIRAL OLMEDO, CHIEF OF THE GOE'S JOINT ARMED FORCES COM-
MAND, SAID THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WOULD NOT BE TO POUND
THE TABLE ABOUT THE KFIR REFUSAL, OVER WHICH INITIAL IN-
DIGNATION WAS ALREADY GIVING WAY TO SOBER REALISM. HE
SAID THE GOE HAD DETERMINED AT A FEBRUARY 15 MEETING THAT
IT WOULD NOT ALLOW BILATERAL RELATIONS TO BE DISRUPTED
EVEN IF THE US DENIED IT THE WEAPONRY IT NEEDED. OLMEDO
SAID THE MISSION WOULD BE AIMED AT MAKING THE US AWARE OF
THE SERIOUS DEFENSE PROBLEMS ECUADOR FACES, IN HOPES THE
GOE COULD STILL OBTAIN AIR DEFENSE AID FROM THE US AND
AVOID GOING TO THE SOVIETS.

6. THE NEXT FOREIGN SECRETARY

EMBASSY LONDON REPORTS THAT PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN HAS
ALREADY DECIDED ON A SUCCESSOR TO FOREIGN SECRETARY
CROSLAND, WHOSE CONDITION IS AGAIN DETERIORATING.
CALLAGHAN WILL PROBABLY ANNOUNCE HIS DECISION TO THE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 06 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

HOUSE OF COMMONS ON FEBRUARY 22. SINCE CHANCELLOR OF THE

EXCHEQUER HEALEY APPEARS TO HAVE REMOVED HIMSELF FROM CONSIDERATION, THE CHOICE WILL LIKELY BE EITHER PETER SHORE OR MERLYN REES. SHORE IS CHARACTERIZED BY EMBASSY LONDON AS A MAN WHO HATES FOREIGNERS. EUROPEANS IN PARTICULAR MAY FIND IT DISTASTEFUL TO DEAL WITH HIM, AS HE WAS AN OUTSPOKEN OPPONENT OF BRITISH ENTRY INTO THE EC. REES, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS DESCRIBED AS A CALLAGHAN PROTEGE WHO DID A GOOD JOB IN NORTHERN IRELAND BEFORE MOVING TO HIS PRESENT POSITION AS HOME SECRETARY. REES IS ALSO KNOWN TO BE WELL-DISPOSED TOWARDS THE US.

1. SOVIET COMMENT ON SECRETARY'S ME TRIP

YESTERDAY'S SOVIET COMMENT ON YOUR MIDDLE EAST MISSION SUGGESTED THAT THERE WAS NO CHANGE IN TEL AVIV'S "NEGATIVE STAND" REGARDING RESUMPTION OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE AS A RESULT OF YOUR TALKS WITH ISRAELI LEADERS. A MOSCOW RADIO BROADCAST STATED THAT THE ISRAELIS REITERATED THEIR REFUSAL TO ACCEPT PLO PARTICIPATION IN THE GENEVA TALKS, THEIR UNWILLINGNESS TO WITHDRAW FROM ALL THE TERRITORIES OCCUPIED IN 1967, AND THEIR INTENTION TO RESUME BILATERAL TALKS WITH EACH OF THE ARAB COUNTRIES SEPARATELY. THE BROADCAST CLAIMED "PRESS OBSERVERS" COVERING THE TALKS REPORTED THAT ISRAEL'S "AMBITIONS" MET NO OBJECTION FROM THE US.

WE HAVE SEEN NO SOVIET REACTION TO YESTERDAY'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THE US WILL NOT PROVIDE CONCUSSION BOMBS TO ISRAEL. BUT THE MOSCOW RADIO COMMENTATOR NOTED THAT THE QUESTION OF NEW CONSIGNMENTS OF US ARMS FOR ISRAEL RECEIVED SPECIAL ATTENTION DURING THE TALKS WITH THE ISRAELIS.

2. CUBAN INTENTIONS IN ANGOLA

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 07 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

FIDEL CASTRO IS WELL AWARE OF THE COMPLICATIONS THAT CUBAN MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA POSES FOR IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS WITH THE US, BUT A LARGE REDUCTION OF CUBAN TROOPS WOULD SEVERELY WEAKEN MPLA CONTROL OVER EXTENSIVE AREAS OF THE COUNTRY AND POSSIBLY EVEN THREATEN THE NETO REGIME'S STABILITY.

IF FACED WITH AN INFLEXIBLE DEMAND TO REMOVE CUBAN TROOPS AS THE PRICE OF NORMALIZED RELATIONS WITH US, WE BELIEVE CASTRO WOULD VERY LIKELY CHOOSE TO DEFER NEGOTIATIONS ON NORMALIZATION.

CUBA'S MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA ALMOST CERTAINLY

HAS BECOME MUCH MORE COSTLY IN LIVES AND MONEY THAN HAVANA ANTICIPATED IN 1975 WHEN THE DECISION TO COMMIT COMBAT TROOPS WAS MADE. THE INITIAL EUPHORIA OF MILITARY VICTORY FELT A YEAR AGO HAS BEEN REPLACED BY A REALIZATION THAT THE ARMED CONFLICT IN ANGOLA WILL BE VERY PROTRACTED, AND THAT, WITHOUT CUBAN TROOP SUPPORT, THE MPLA IS INCAPABLE OF SUSTAINING ITS HOLD EVEN OVER MUCH OF THE TERRITORY IT NOW CONTROLS.

CASTRO'S INDICATION LAST SPRING THAT HE PLANNED TO WITHDRAW TROOPS AT THE RATE OF 200-250 PER WEEK PROBABLY REFLECTED HIS REAL INTENTIONS. HE WOULD STILL LIKE TO REPLACE AS MANY OF HIS TROOPS AS POSSIBLE WITH CIVILIAN TECHNICIANS. THE CONTINUING ABILITY OF THE UNITA, FNLA, AND FLEC GUERRILLAS TO WITHSTAND CUBAN/MPLA OPERATIONS AND INFLICT CASUALTIES HAS PROBABLY INCREASED CASTRO'S DESIRE TO END CUBA'S MILITARY INVOLVEMENT. AT THE SAME TIME, IT HAS MADE IT MUCH HARDER TO DO SO.

THE ANGOLAN INTERVENTION HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO THE CUBAN PEOPLE AS A SMASHING SUCCESS WHICH FULLY JUSTIFIED THEIR SACRIFICES IN TERMS OF CASUALTIES, DISRUPTED LIVES, AND SHORTAGES OF BASIC GOODS. TO WITHDRAW PREMATURELY WOULD
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 08 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

SEVERELY DAMAGE CASTRO'S CHARISMATIC APPEAL IN CUBA AS WELL AS CUBA'S PRESTIGE IN AFRICA AND THE THIRD WORLD.

IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT THEREFORE FOR CASTRO TO ACCEPT PROMPT WITHDRAWAL OF ALL OR MOST REMAINING CUBAN TROOPS AS A PREREQUISITE FOR NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH THE US. ASIDE FROM THE PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES ALREADY OUTLINED, CASTRO HAS REPEATEDLY INSISTED THAT CUBA'S

INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA WAS A LEGITIMATE RESPONSE TO A REQUEST BY A FRIENDLY COUNTRY, AND HE HAS CHARGED THE US WITH HYPOCRISY IN DEMANDING WITHDRAWAL OF CUBAN TROOPS. FURTHERMORE, HE IS VERY SENSITIVE TO ANY SUGGESTIONS THAT CUBA IS LESS FREE THAN THE MAJOR POWERS TO PURSUE ITS NATIONAL INTERESTS ABROAD BY MILITARY OR NON-MILITARY MEANS.

3. USSR: MOSCOW'S DILEMMA ON DISSIDENCE AND DETENTE

BREZHNEV AND HIS COLLEAGUES HOPE TO BE ABLE TO PUT AN END TO THE MORE BLATANT ASPECTS OF DISSIDENT ACTIVITIES WITHOUT STIMULATING MAJOR REPRISALS FROM THE US. BUT THE LATTER RISK IS ONE THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO ACCEPT; DOMESTIC IMPERATIVES TAKE PRIORITY.

THE KREMLIN'S THRESHHOLD FOR US PUBLIC CRITICISM OF THE USSR HAS RISEN SUBSTANTIALLY IN THE YEARS OF DETENTE, BUT IT IS STILL AN UNEASY, UNNATURAL AND LIMITED TOLERANCE. THE CHALLENGE TO AUTHORITY IMPLICIT IN EVEN A HANDFUL OF DISSIDENTS FLAUNTING ACTIVE LINKS TO OUTSIDE "ENEMY FORCES" TOUCHES A MOST SENSITIVE NERVE. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE WHEN MEMBERS OF THE TOP LEADERSHIP FEEL THEMSELVES PERSONALLY INVOLVED.

THUS FAR BREZHNEV HAS LIMITED HIMSELF PUBLICLY TO USING TASS HEAD LAPIN TO VOICE HIS DISPLEASURE. IF HE COMES
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 09 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

TO BELIEVE THAT HIS STATUS AS SOVIET PRIMUS INTER PARES IS UNDER ATTACK, HE MIGHT WELL FEEL CONSTRAINED TO COMMIT HIS PERSONAL PRESTIGE.

THE RESULTANT ANIMUS WOULD BE LIKELY TO SPILL OVER INTO OTHER ASPECTS OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP DESPITE BREZHNEV'S WISH TO ACTIVELY PURSUE SALT II, AS EVIDENCED BY HIS JANUARY 18 SPEECH IN TULA. INDEED, BREZHNEV'S DESIRE OR EVEN ABILITY TO CONCERT SOVIET POLICY ON DETENTE COULD BE LESSENED.

THE DISSIDENTS VIEW THE PERIOD PRECEDING THE JUNE CSCE REVIEW CONFERENCE AS A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME OPPORTUNITY TO PRESSURE THE AUTHORITIES FOR CONCESSIONS IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS AREA, AND THEY ARE USING IT TO THE MAXIMUM.

--DISSIDENTS OF ALL SHADES OF OPINION WITHIN THE SOVIET UNION ARE SHOWING MORE COHESIVENESS AND COURAGE THAN AT ANY TIME SINCE THE SOVIET INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA IN 1968.

--THEY HAVE BEEN ENCOURGED BY PUBLICITY AND SUPPORT FROM THE WEST.

--THEY ARE AWARE THAT THE WEAPON THEY HAVE CHOSEN TO INVOKE--THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT--IS ONE WHICH THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT CANNOT EASILY ATTACK OR DISREGARD.

ALTHOUGH THE DISSIDENTS, WHO MAY NUMBER ONLY SEVERAL THOUSAND NATIONWIDE, POSE NO REAL DANGER TO THE STABILITY OF THE SYSTEM, THE AUTHORITIES REGARD THEM AS POTENTIAL FIFTH COLUMNISTS. THEY HAVE, THEREFORE, GRADUALLY WHITTLED AWAY AT THE MOVEMENT BY INTERMITTENT HARASSMENT AND IMPLIED THREATS, WHILE RESERVING SPECIAL TACTICS, E.G., EXPULSIONS FROM THE COUNTRY, INTERNAL EXILE, AND INCARCERATION FOR THE MOST PROMINENT--ARRESTS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 10 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

HAVE BEEN LIMITED, HOWEVER, TO THREE OR FOUR LEADERS IN RECENT WEEKS.

THE KREMLIN EVIDENTLY FEELS THAT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEM OF SELECTIVE REPRESSION, WHICH HAS BEEN USED SINCE STALIN'S TIME, HAS REDUCED THE NECESSITY FOR WIDE-SPREAD RESORT TO STALINIST METHODS WHICH COULD:

--UNLEASH INTERNAL FORCES AFFECTING THE CONFIGURATION OF POWER WITHIN THE LEADERSHIP;

--LEAD TO LOWERED POPULAR MORALE AND THUS AFFECT LABOR PRODUCTIVITY, ESPECIALLY IN THE SCIENTIFIC-TECHNICAL AREA;

--INTERFERE WITH FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES, SUCH AS INCREASED TRADE AND ACQUISITION OF ADVANCED WESTERN TECHNOLOGY;

--SEVERELY DAMAGE MOSCOW'S IMAGE AND INFLUENCE AMONG WESTERN COMMUNIST PARTIES;

--TRANSGRESS THE LIMITS OF TOLERATION IN THE AMERICAN PUBLIC AND CONGRESS AND AFFECT THE ARMS TALKS, DESPITE THE ADMINISTRATION'S "DECOUPLING" OF HUMAN RIGHTS FROM THEM.

4. SYRIA/USSR: BILATERAL RELATIONS

SYRIA HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING TO REDUCE ITS VULNERABILITY TO SOVIET PRESSURES BY DIVERSIFYING ITS SOURCES OF ARMS SUPPLY AND REDUCING THE SOVIET ADVISORY PRESENCE, AN EFFORT UNDOUBTEDLY ENCOURAGED BY BOTH EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA.

ASAD CONTINUES TO NEED THE SOVIETS, HOWEVER, AND A

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 11 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

SERIOUS DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS, ON THE SCALE THAT HAS OCCURRED BETWEEN EGYPT AND THE SOVIET UNION, IS UNLIKELY.

WE HAVE RECENTLY RECEIVED REPORTS OF SYRIAN EFFORTS TO SEEK FRENCH MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND OFFICER TRAINING. WE HAVE EVIDENCE THAT THE SYRIANS ARE INTERESTED IN

PURCHASING ARMS FROM WEST GERMANY AND BRITAIN, AS WELL AS PHOTOGRAPHIC AND COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT FROM THE US.

KEY MILITARY OFFICERS WOULD LIKE TO RE-ORIENT THE COUNTRY'S MILITARY TOWARD WESTERN TECHNIQUES AND EQUIPMENT. SEVERAL FRENCH-TRAINED OFFICERS, INCLUDING THE COMMANDANT OF THE STAFF COLLEGE AND THE DIRECTOR OF DEFENSE INDUSTRIES, HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN URGING SUCH A SHIFT. THEY POINT TO THE SUPERIOR COMBAT PERFORMANCE OF WESTERN-TRAINED OFFICERS DURING THE 1973 WAR. THEY ALSO BELIEVE THAT SOVIET EQUIPMENT IS NOT UP TO WESTERN STANDARDS, AND THAT SOVIET DELIVERY SCHEDULES HAVE BEEN UNSATISFACTORY.

ASAD RESENTED THE PRESSURES THE SOVIETS PUT TO HIM LAST YEAR TO FOREGO OR LIMIT HIS MILITARY CAMPAIGN IN LEBANON. WHILE THE RELATIONSHIP IMPROVED SOMEWHAT FOLLOWING THE CESSATION OF FIGHTING IN NOVEMBER, THERE HAVE BEEN INTERMITTENT REPORTS SINCE THAT TIME OF SYRIAN DISPLEASURE WITH THE SOVIETS.

IT WOULD BE PREMATURE, HOWEVER, TO EXPECT ASAD TO TRY TO ELIMINATE SOVIET INFLUENCE FROM SYRIA IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE TO THE DEGREE THAT SADAT HAS DONE IN EGYPT. AS LONG AS SYRIAN FORCES ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN LEBANON AND IN THE ABSENCE OF ANY FURTHER AGREEMENT ON THE GOLAN HEIGHTS, SYRIA MUST MAINTAIN A DEGREE OF MILITARY PREPAREDNESS THAT AT PRESENT ONLY THE SOVIETS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 12 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

CAN PROVIDE. THIS WILL BE ESPECIALLY TRUE OVER THE COMING MONTHS; SHOULD THE PEACE PROCESS RESUME, ASAD

WILL WANT TO MAINTAIN A MILITARY POSTURE THAT LENDS CREDIBILITY TO HIS NEGOTIATING POSITIONS.

THERE ARE ALSO DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS. THE ARMED FORCES AS A WHOLE, WHOSE SUPPORT IS CRITICAL FOR ASAD AND WHICH REMAIN SUSCEPTIBLE TO FACTIONALISM, WILL OPPOSE ANY SERIOUS DEGRADATION OF THEIR CAPABILITY. IN ADDITION, BAATH PARTY IDEOLOGUES WILL RESIST ANY RADICAL SHIFT IN SYRIA'S ORIENTATION AWAY FROM THE SOCIALIST BLOC.

THIS WOULD BE AN AWKWARD TIME IN THE PEACE PROCESS FOR ASAD TO TAMPER WITH SYRIAN-SOVIET RELATIONS. ALTHOUGH COMMITTED TO NEGOTIATIONS WHICH HE UNDERSTANDS DEPEND PRIMARILY ON US GOOD OFFICES, ASAD IS CURRENTLY ENGAGED IN AN IMPLICIT COOPERATIVE EFFORT WITH THE SOVIETS TO

FORCE THE PLO TO MODERATE ITS BASIC POSITIONS. IN ADDITION, IF NEGOTIATIONS DO RESUME IN GENEVA, ASAD WILL FIND THE PRESENCE OF A FRIENDLY SOVIET CO-CHAIRMAN USEFUL IN KEEPING THE PALESTINIAN ISSUE IN FOCUS AND IN CHECKING ANY EGYPTIAN TENDENCY TO COMPROMISE TOO READILY.

FROM THE SOVIET PERSPECTIVE, SYRIA'S IMPORTANCE HAS GROWN WITH THE FURTHER DETERIORATION OF SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS AND THE SETBACK TO PLO PRESTIGE AND AUTHORITY RESULTING FROM THE DEBACLE IN LEBANON. ASAD KNOWS THIS, OF COURSE, AND HAS CAPITALIZED ON THE USSR'S "DEPENDENCE" TO GAIN SOME ROOM FOR MANEUVER.

NEVERTHELESS, THOUGH DISTURBED BY ASAD'S WILLFULNESS REGARDING LEBANON AND HIS MOVE TOWARD CLOSER COOPERATION WITH EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA, THE SOVIETS PROBABLY
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 13 STATE 038243 TOSEC 020125

CALCULATE THAT THEY CAN MAINTAIN A PRETTY STRONG POSITION IN SYRIA. ASAD'S EFFORTS TO DILUTE THE SOURCES OF SOVIET LEVERAGE OVER HIS REGIME HAVE NOT PROGRESSED VERY FAR. MOSCOW'S POTENTIAL FOR CAUSING HIM SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES BY MANIPULATING ARMS SUPPLIES, ECONOMIC AND TRADE TIES, AND, TO A LIMITED DEGREE, SYMPATHETIC POLITICAL FORCES WITHIN AND OUTSIDE SYRIA GIVES THE KREMLIN A NUMBER OF INSTRUMENTS, AS YET LARGELY UNTESTED, TO KEEP ASAD IN LINE. SHOULD NEGOTIATIONS RESUME, THEY ALSO MOST CERTAINLY COUNT ON ASAD'S CONTINUING NEED FOR SOVIET SUPPORT TO CURB ANY IDEAS HE MAY HAVE ABOUT DRASTIC STEPS TO DIMINISH SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN SYRIA.
HARTMAN

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE038243
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: O: DGREENLEE INR/CIS:PETERSON/SHOEMAKE
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770059-0368
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770225/aaaaawok.tel
Line Count: 531
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: b666f2c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SSO
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 10
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3277118
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SPECIAL SUMMARY NUMBER FIVE: TELEGRAPHIC AND INTELLIGENCE A. TELEGRAPHIC SUMMARY
TAGS: PFOR, PINR, (VANCE, CYRUS R)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/b666f2c3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009